



**Where Rev. Hughes pastored, while in Southwestern Baptist Seminary: First Baptist Church, Point, Texas, as it looks today.**

POINT, TEXAS. Point is at the intersection of U.S. Highway 69 with Farm roads 47 and 514, eight miles northwest of Emory and sixty miles east of Dallas in northwest Rains County. It originated about 1880 as a flag station and post office on a section of the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railroad being built from Mineola to Greenville. Residents proposed the name of Rice's Point, in honor of William Rice, a Kentuckian who had settled the area in the 1840s when it was a part of Van Zandt County. The post office rejected that and several other names because they were already in use.

In 1890 Point had fifty residents, a public school, and four churches. On August 28, 1902, ten men, led by newspaperman Isaac Newton Gresham, met in Point and signed a charter to establish the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America. The Farmers Union, as it is generally called, became a national organization by 1905 and enrolled its one-millionth member three years later. The organization became so large that it had to move its headquarters to Mineola because the volume of mail was more than the Point post office could handle.

In 1913 Point established the first independent school district in Rains County and erected a two-story brick schoolhouse. Also that year a newspaper, the Point Enterprise, began publication. By 1914 the number of inhabitants reached 600. The Great Depression caused a drop in the Point population from 600 in 1931 to 308 in 1933. The number of businesses likewise fell from twenty-five to eighteen. Point's decline paralleled the demise of the cotton industry in Rains County, where production fell from a near record high of 6,420 bales in 1931 to fewer than 3,000 bales by 1935.

In the early 1940s U.S. Highway 69, paralleling the MKT railroad from one corner of the county to the other, was paved. This may have accounted for a mild resurgence in population, which reached 420 by 1943. In 1945 Point had 350 residents and eleven businesses. Through the 1950s and into the 1960s the population remained about 400, and the number of businesses stayed around fifteen. During the mid-1950s the MKT line was abandoned. In 1957 Iron Bridge Dam was constructed on the Sabine River to form Lake Tawakoni, which by the time it reached its fullest extent in 1960 was only four miles from Point.

In the late 1960s Point reported 589 inhabitants, as residential development began on the western shore of the lake. The community was also incorporated at this time. By 1970 the lakeside residents had organized themselves and incorporated the town of East Tawakoni. Consequently, the population of Point declined to 419 in the 1970 census. Thanks to tourism and to the town's ongoing role as a local center for agricultural trade, Point continued to grow slowly but steadily throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Two small manufacturing concerns have located in Point, a metal casting plant and a maker of wire products. Point's population in 1990 was 645. The population grew to 792 in 2000.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: 100th Anniversary of Rains County (Emory, Texas: Hill, 1970).

(Source; Steven R. Davis, "POINT, TX," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hlp36>). Published by the Texas State Historical Association.